

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 18, 2010

The Honorable Barack Obama  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

On Friday, February 12, we traveled to Haiti with a bipartisan group of colleagues from the House and Senate, led by Speaker Pelosi. The situation in Port-au-Prince, Haiti is dire. While much good work has been done to provide water and food, and to bury the dead, international assistance will be required for years to come.

Although a disaster of historic proportions, this earthquake provides great opportunity for renewal and rebirth as tragedies of the past have for cities around the globe. The goal must not be to return Haiti to where it was on January 11, 2010, but to assist the Haitian people in rebuilding a better, prosperous, and stable country.

We understand that in the coming weeks your administration will put forth a funding proposal to provide further relief to the Haitian people. For our efforts to be accomplished, that funding must be pursuant to a long term-plan for the success of Haiti's redevelopment. Accordingly, we suggest the following:

With the aid of the international community, Haiti must develop a long-term plan for investment. That plan must include defined goals and accountability measures that ensure both transparency and sustainable progress. Second, funds must be provided in a significant way to the Haitian people directly. Micro-loans for small businesses and similar targeted programs that are directly linked to economic performance will foster entrepreneurship and organic business growth. Third, a priority of international assistance to Haiti must be to ensure the well-being, safety, and security of the thousands of orphans that are currently living in Haiti. Fourth, long-term projects must focus on infrastructure and job growth with a special attention on developing centers of commerce outside the capital city, to strengthen the economy and disperse the population. Finally, a task force composed of Haitian-American leaders should be convened to tap the energy and vigor of America's Haitian community to sustain support for the relief effort.

In the short term, a joint effort must begin immediately to move displaced Haitians to high ground before the rainy season begins in the coming weeks. Thousands of Haitians are

living in low-lying camps, and tragedy will strike again when the rain comes. We urge your administration to stress this point with President Préval and Prime Minister Bellerive.

In the midst of the terrible disaster, we were all struck by the strength and resiliency of the Haitian people. With a long-term, measurable plan for redevelopment, the people of Haiti can achieve an economy and a society worthy of our investment and their tremendous sacrifice.

Sincerely,



GEORGE S. LEMIEUX  
UNITED STATES SENATOR



BILL NELSON  
UNITED STATES SENATOR



AMY KLOBUCHAR  
UNITED STATES SENATOR



FRANK R. LAUTENBERG  
UNITED STATES SENATOR